

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 27, 2007**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES**

**The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 7:00 p.m. in the Exeter-West Greenwich Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Frank Maher; Bill Munroe; Robert Bollengier, and Mary Walsh. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley; Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo; and Student Member Geoffrey Southworth were present.**

**ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and she read the District Mission Statement.**

**OPEN FORUM – EWG Sports for Kids president/parent volunteer Sharon Pelsler presented the School Committee with a framed poster of photographs from EWG Sports for Kids 4th Annual Steven J. Anderson Road Race to display within the school district.**

**PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – Student Member Geoffrey Southworth reminded members of the scheduled March 16th**

**Pasta Dinner which will benefit fire victims (Metcalf teachers) Lenore Dorson and Denise Sherman and of the senior high drama department's upcoming performance of "Little Shop of Horrors" scheduled for March 8, 9, 10, and 11. Geoffrey gave an overview of the outstanding athletic achievements of two senior high students. He reported that gymnast Kiahra LaBrie won the RI Interscholastic League Individual State Championship and Kara Chelo and her skating team has qualified to represent the United States at the Synchronized Skating World Challenge Cup in Great Britain sometime in March. Lastly, Geoffrey confirmed that the senior high school sports' teams are beginning playoffs this week.**

**Achievements/Recognitions – EWG Sr. High School Girls' Soccer Team Sportsmanship Award – Chair DeSack recognized the EWG Sr. High School Girls' Soccer Team coaches and teammates as recent recipients of two tremendous sportsmanship awards. They received The RI Girls' Soccer Officials Recognition Award and The Dick Reynolds Sportsmanship Award – (voted by the Providence Journal sports staff which is awarded to only one high school team each fall season). Superintendent Geismar expressed how special sportsmanship awards are and how proud he is of the teams' representation of the school district. On behalf of the School Committee, Chair DeSack presented Coach Fraser and Assistant Coach Hummel with a "School Committee Apple Recognition Award" for a job well done. Vice Chair Cicero and Clerk Coutcher presented recognition certificates to each team member.**

**EWG Jr. High School NELMS Spotlight School Award – Chair DeSack acknowledged that EWG Jr. High School was awarded status as a NELMS Spotlight School. Superintendent Geismar explained that out of approximately 1200 middle**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 27, 2007**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 2**

**schools in the New England League of Middle Schools only twenty-six were chosen to receive the spotlight award. He expressed that the district is very proud of EWG Jr. High School for its accomplishment of receiving this award. Principal Thompson introduced faculty members Gregg Charest, Michael Walsh, and Dawn Seitz and he explained that the initial intent of submitting an application was not to seek an award but to obtain the opinion of an outside agency as to how the junior high was doing. Principal Thompson expressed appreciation for everyone's support in helping to achieve this accomplishment. On behalf of the School Committee, Chair DeSack presented Principal Thompson with a recognition plaque commending the Jr. High School Administration, Faculty, and Staff for their dedication to the students of EWG.**

**ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.**

**Member Munroe requested consent agenda item, B., 2. a. Request for**

**an extension of his leave of absence, without pay, from Larry Purtill from his position as Sr. High School History Teacher for the 2007 – 2008 and 2008 – 2009 school years be pulled for discussion near the conclusion of tonight's meeting.**

**Member Maher moved to accept the consent agenda with item, B.,2., a. pulled. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 7 – 0.**

**The following items were approved:**

**A. Approval of Minutes – Joint Meeting Minutes of January 31, 2007; Regular Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2007; Executive Session Minutes of February 13, 2007**

**B. Personnel Items – (No Change to FTE's)**

**1. Appointments – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)**

**a. Christopher Massed, as 0.5 FTE Sr. High Special Education Teacher, Step 1, Masters, Salary \$9,453.00, effective on or about February 28, 2007**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 27, 2007**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 3**

**2. Leaves of Absence – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)**

**a. -**

**b. Request for an extension of her leave of absence, without pay, from Christine Petrarca from her position as a Grade 4 Elementary Teacher at Metcalf School for the 2007 – 2008 school year, in order to continue as a**

**c. Teacher Quality Fellow at the Rhode Island Department of Education**

**3. Resignations**

**4. Grievances**

**5. Non-Renewals – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)**

**a. See attached FINAL list**

**C. Bills – In the amount of \$293,681.84**

## **End Consent Agenda**

**Members did not voice any questions or concerns regarding Correspondence.**

**Correspondence – (1) February 15, 2007 Letter to Maureen DeCrescenzo from Andrew Henneous, (2) February 21, 2007 Memo from Superintendent Geismar and information regarding EWG History Department Holiday Observances, (3) February 21, 2007 Memo from Superintendent Geismar and the Proposed 2007 – 2008 Budget, (4) February 21, 2007 Memo from Superintendent Geismar Regarding Student Recognition, (5) February 18, 2007 Memo from Bob Ross and information regarding Health Care Analysis Based on HC Sub-Committee Meetings, (6) 2006 School Report Cards based on data for 2005 – 2006**

**Student Achievement – NECAP Testing Results – For the benefit of the new School Committee members, Superintendent Geismar gave a brief summary of the NECAP testing process/function. Referencing the Fall 2006 NECAP Test District Summary charts provided for members' review, Curriculum Director Nancy Daley answered members' clarifying questions and gave a summary of the data content. Superintendent Geismar said that the district is taking a team approach to review this detailed information and investigate what options to utilize over the next three months to address what the data is reporting in order to move students forward. Members and**

**Administrators briefly discussed reading, writing, and math levels. In response to Member Munroe's inquiry regarding grade 4 special education students' reading achievement, Mrs. Daley confirmed**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 27, 2007**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 4**

**that upon completion of a more in-depth review of the data this type of statistics will be provided to members. Dr. Geismar reminded members that the district is currently in the process of investigating implementing a new math program in order to meet students' needs and to help with improvement. Ms. Daley reported that EWG is currently above the state average in math.**

**NEW BUSINESS – 2006 Audit Report – Superintendent Geismar introduced District Treasurer Kate LaCroix and Patricia Boucher of Bacon & Company, CPA's. Dr. Geismar expressed how pleased he is to report that the audit questions from the previous year have been addressed which is a reflection of the good job that Mrs. LaCroix has done. Member Bollengier voiced his concerns that he had not had enough time prior to tonight's meeting to completely review the audit report. Chair DeSack said that members may submit their questions regarding the audit report to her and she will forward them to Mrs. Boucher for clarification. Chair DeSack said that going forward this report shall be provided to members two weeks prior to the date it is scheduled to appear on an agenda. Mrs. Boucher gave an overview of the 2006 Audit Report. Member Maher asked clarifying questions**

and made comments regarding the food services fund. Chair DeSack said that the food services fund discussion would have to be added to a future agenda for discussion since it is not an item on tonight's agenda. Upon hearing Mrs. LaCroix's projection that the food services fund should be back in the black by the end of June, Member Maher said it is not necessary to add this item to a future agenda. Members asked clarifying questions regarding the student activities fund and its bank reconciliation process. Member Maher made inquiry regarding page 7 – Research/Analysis Expenses. Ms. LaCroix agreed to get back to Member Maher in response to his inquiry since she could not answer his question at this time.

**In\$ite Certification** – District Treasurer Kate LaCroix gave an explanation of the annual In\$ite Expenditure Report and its process. She said that this report provides chart and graft breakouts depicting all RI school districts' expenditures for analysis purposes. Ms. LaCroix reminded members they may visit the RI Department of Education's website @ [ridoe.gov](http://ridoe.gov) under Infoworks, to view additional charts.

**Robert's Rules and Meeting Protocol** – Members discussed Robert's Rules and meeting protocol in contrast to the modified version of Robert's Rules that the committee has been utilizing at its meetings for the past 4 – 5 years. Chair DeSack asked the committee to consider if it has become necessary to follow a stricter protocol where the open dialogue and discussion format will no longer be

allowed at meetings since at the previous meeting of February 13th “things got out of control”. She also asked members to consider if it is necessary to begin to employ an officer of the law at meetings in order to help control meetings when they become unruly. She asked for direction on how the committee wishes to proceed. Upon completion of further detailed discussion regarding the Chair’s function at meetings, Robert’s Rules, and members engaging in discussion and debate while remaining focused on the issue at hand rather than discussing

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 27, 2007**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 5**

someone’s personality, consensus of the committee was to continue following the committees’ current modified meeting format. This modified format will allow all members, after being recognized by the Chair, to speak to an agenda topic; require members to remain focused on the agenda topic; require members to respect the rules of the meeting; and require members to respect each other and not to interrupt another member’s time to speak. With regard to Chair DeSack’s inquiry concerning employing a police officer at meetings, consensus was to continue with the open discussion format and if the open discussion format does not work, to then move forward with employing a police officer.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Metcalf Fire Alarm – Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross gave a brief progress report on the**

**status of the Metcalf fire alarm project to date. He confirmed that the awarded service provider AFA is targeting April vacation as a completion date. In response to Member Maher's expression of concern regarding AFA's untidiness on the jobsite, Mr. Ross confirmed that these concerns have been addressed and that he has instructed Director of Maintenance Bill Plumley to report to Metcalf School first thing each morning to ensure that there are no reoccurring incidences.**

**IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS –Thursday, March 1, 2007 – Town Council/School Committee Joint Meeting; Tuesday, March 6, 2007 – Budget Workshop; Tuesday, March 13, 2007 – School Committee Meeting – (Budget Adoption); Friday, March 16, 2007 – Deadline for Motions to Change the Budget by More than \$10,000; Monday, March 26, 2007 – Public Hearing; Tuesday, March 27, 2007 – School Committee Meeting; Monday, April 9, 2007 – District Financial Meeting**

**REPORTS/COMMENTS – Member Munroe voiced his concerns regarding the present budget timeline and suggested reversing the dates of the upcoming March 1, 2007 – Town Council/School Committee Joint Meeting and the March 6, 2007 – Budget Workshop in order to allow the School Committee to fully discuss the budget prior to meeting with town council members. It was determined that timeline constraints of the Open Meeting Laws will not allow for such a change. Member Bollengier gave his opinion that it is the function**

of the Town Councils to fund the budget and questions about programs are a matter for the School Committee to discuss. Member Munroe expressed his desire to review each budget line item since he has several questions regarding the proposed budget. Member Bollengier advised that it would be appropriate to, in the form of a motion, revert back to Correspondence and pull (3) February 21, 2007 Memo from Superintendent Geismar and the Proposed 2007 – 2008 Budget for discussion.

Member Walsh moved to open and discuss Correspondence (3) Proposed 2007 – 2008 Budget. Seconded by Member Munroe. Voted 7 – 0.

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 27, 2007**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 6**

Correspondence - (3) February 21, 2007 Memo from Superintendent Geismar and the Proposed 2007 – 2008 Budget – Members asked specific clarifying questions regarding the proposed 2007 – 2008 Budget. Some topics of discussion included why line items that have been reallocated remain as a placeholder (zeroed out) on the spreadsheet, the BMT Department, the Jr. / Sr. High Art Department, Transportation cuts, Phase II of Metcalf School's fire alarm project – (Egress), monies appropriated to EWG Sports for Kids, reallocation of Literacy Program cuts, Miscellaneous Income, and incoming students

**paying tuition. Chair DeSack expressed her opinion that this budget reflects the hard work that Administration has done, especially with cutting portions and finding ways to save without changing the education of EWG students.**

**Member Munroe asked clarifying questions regarding roof repairs and potentially requesting taxpayers to go to bond.**

**Vice Chair Cicero and Member Walsh left the meeting at this time, (9:20 p.m.).**

**Members debated whether or not the committee has plans to request to go to bond. In response to Member Munroe's inquiry, Director of Administration Robert Ross gave a detailed explanation regarding the function of the General Fund and the Capital Project Fund.**

**Student Member Geoffrey Southworth left the meeting at this time, (9:26 p.m.).**

**Chair DeSack asked members if their questions regarding the 07/08 Budget have been answered. Member Munroe replied, "No."**

**Vice Chair Cicero and Member Walsh returned to the meeting at this time, (9:27 p.m.).**

**Member Munroe said that he wants taxpayers to know that the**

**committee will ask them for a bond. Chair DeSack said that there has been no committee discussion regarding a bond.**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to adjourn.**

**Chair DeSack reminded members that they must first revert back to the item Member Munroe had pulled from the consent agenda for discussion, B., 2. a. Request for an extension of his leave of absence, without pay, from Larry Purtill from his position as Sr. High School History Teacher for the 2007 – 2008 and 2008 – 2009 school years.**

**Member Munroe expressed his opinion that the committee should not approve this request and he explained why. He said that he will not support this request.**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 27, 2007**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 7**

**Member Walsh moved to approve the request. Clerk Coutcher seconded.**

**Members discussed the leave of absence process and procedure, the length of time already allowed for this individual, the bumping process that will take place should this individual return to the district, and some members concerns that this individual, after being out of the district for such a long period of time, may not be up to**

speed with current curriculum. Superintendent Geismar expressed his opinion that the Teachers' Association is involved with what is going on in the schools and individuals actually gain a level of experience that is helpful to the district. Member Maher expressed his opinion that it would not be fair to those individuals the committee has denied extensions to in the past and that there is not an indefinite option to return. Chair DeSack recommended tabling this discussion to the next regular meeting, to invite this individual to attend that meeting, and to consult with Attorney Gorham as to whether the district is obligated under RI Law to grant this request.

Member Walsh withdrew her motion.

This item will carry over to the next agenda.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Vice Chair Cicero moved to go into Executive Session at 9:40 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5 (a) (2) – Collective Bargaining Agreement/Negotiation Discussion. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 7 – 0.**

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 9:40 p.m.

-----Chair DeSack moved to reconvene to Open Session. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero.

Voted 7 - 0.

**Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 10:20 p.m.**

**Votes taken during Executive Session will not be disclosed in Open Session because it may compromise the confidentiality of the vote and jeopardize the interest of the district.**

**ADJOURNMENT – Vice Chair Cicero moved to adjourn at 10:20 p.m. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 7 – 0. Meeting adjourned 10:20 p.m.**

**ROBIN CERIO**

**CLERK**